

The Moonlit Shadow " Call Forth the Light!

by EndlessLunacy

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Summary: Magic. Royalty. Worth. Kuroko Tetsuya had always been living within that suffocating world, until he finally decided to leave to find his own sanctuary. But when the peaceful world he had built began to fall apart, he has no other choice than to return. However, when deadly secrets are revealed, can Kuroko still discern between right and wrong, or will he end up destroying himself?

1. Chapter 1

****Disclaimer:****

All KNB characters in this story belong to Fujimaki Tadatoshi, creator of é»'å-•ã•@ãf•ã,¹ã,±/ Kuroko no Basuke / The Basketball Which Kuroko Plays.

****A/N:****

I've always been wanting to write an AU like this, so I hope that you guys would give this a chance and look favourably upon this story!

And did I mention that this story will contain dragons?

Lovely, beautiful, majestic dragons. Aren't they just awesome?

Please enjoy~

xx

(On a little side note, I am healing up well from my first ever surgery. Just a minor one. It would be nice if I could quickly recover fully!)

* * *

><p>Kuroko hummed, his knife moving swiftly as he cleaned the bird he had caught. Beside him, there was already a large pile of prey all stacked up, just waiting to be cooked.<p>

Today's hunting was good. Kuroko would not have to hunt tomorrow or the day after with this pile of food. Feeling really satisfied, Kuroko's knife made quick work of the bird.

"Done!" Kuroko sighed.

He stood up from where he was crouching, stretching himself.

A soft crooning came from behind him. Kuroko turned his head, and smiled at the large pair of golden snake-like eyes staring at him. Kuroko lifted a hand, and lightly patted the massive head of the beast.

The beast was completely black, except its eyes. The dark colour of its hide allowed it to blend into the dark forest when hunting, becoming nothing more than a shadow. However, in the bright light of the midday sun, the dark black scales took on a beautiful ethereal glow. Yes, scales.

The beast before him had scales, pure black scales that were so hard they could easily cut through diamonds. Those scales were the most fascinating thing Kuroko had ever seen so far, not just because of its colour. They were kind of similar to a cat's retractable claws. When the beast was relaxed, it was perfectly fine to touch it or run your fingers across the scales. However, should the beast become agitated, those scales would stand upright. A single careless touch is enough to rip a hand into pieces.

On all four of its legs, deadly sharp talons replaced its toes. They were thick, strong and large. One could easily tell that a sword was completely useless against such a formidable weapon.

The beast lightly pressed its head into Kuroko's chest, causing Kuroko to stumble back. But he did not fall; he was very familiar with the beast's strength, thus he managed to quickly stabilise himself.

The beast was a staggering ten metres tall, and was approximately 17 metres in length. Kuroko was nothing more than a fly to the beast, yet the beast was always very careful when it was around Kuroko. The beast was one who reigned over the legends of humans, becoming either their ultimate enemy, or their strongest ally.

This beast was a dragon.

A black dragon.

In this time where magic and knights were common, dragons of varying colours occupied many lands and willingly aided the humans.

So far, only five different dragon colours are known. Green, red, bronze, white and black.

Even among the dragons, there were ranks. Green dragons were the lowest, the weakest. And white dragons were the strongest. But there

is an exception, the black dragons.

White dragons were regarded as royalty, and black dragons were the villains.

Black dragons were evil incarnate, so they say. They were vicious, killing humans and destroying mountains on a whim. They even killed other dragons that they dislike. Thus, even among the dragons, black dragons were not well received.

Black dragons were removed from the list of honourable dragons, they were nothing more than big prey for adventure teams to hunt down and kill.

But the reason why there were still so many of them was because they rivalled the white dragon in strength. Mature black dragons were even stronger than a white dragon could ever hope to be.

Therefore, when Kuroko had first found a tiny black dragon baby, he was forced into a complicated decision. Five years ago, Kuroko was hunting for prey when he stumbled across a baby black dragon. The baby dragon was a tiny little thing, barely reaching past Kuroko's ankles. Not only was it tiny, it was clearly malnourished.

Kuroko had ignored the baby dragon at first, choosing instead to carefully scout around the area. Dragons lived in a world where the strong dominated the weak, very similar to humans in fact. Female dragons will often lay a clutch of eight eggs, and the first four to break out of the shell were guaranteed to be protected by the mother dragon. However, for the other four late boomers, it was a different story. The moment they were born, they were thrown into a harsh world of constant battle. The mother dragon would not feed the weak.

Therefore, it was no surprise if dragons were thrown out of the nest by their older siblings. But that also meant that there was a family of dragons nearby. Kuroko had no desire to be killed by a dragon, thus he made sure to search the area carefully before he even dared to touch the topic of what he should do with the baby dragon.

Once discerning that it was safe, Kuroko headed back to the baby dragon and proceeded to start a staring match with it.

The baby dragon stared back at Kuroko without fear. Dragons were extremely wise and had many powers. There was a power that even allowed them to see the future. Of course, a dragon would have to be extremely strong in order to use such a divine power.

Only white and black dragons were capable of seeing the future.

This little black baby dragon was too young for it to learn how to see the future, so Kuroko was a little reassured. At least he was confident that whatever choice he made, he chose it on his own, and was not influenced by the cunning dragon.

The baby dragon was young, but not stupid. Even at that young age, it already knew Kuroko was different from it. It knew that even in its weakened state, if it chooses to, it would be able to kill Kuroko. And it also knew that Kuroko knew what it was capable of.

Eventually, Kuroko heaved a soft sigh. With firm determination, he walked towards the dragon and picked it up. The dragon was startled at first, causing deep wounds " due to its scales " in Kuroko's hands before it calmed. Kuroko did not mind, such a reaction was among the things he expected. Though he was a little surprised at how fast the baby dragon realized the situation.

Kuroko lifted the baby dragon to eye level, and spoke to it.

"I do not know if you are capable of understanding human speech yet, but I simply want to tell you that from now on, I will be taking care of you. You do not have to worry, you are free. Should you choose to leave my side once you have gotten old enough, I will not stop you."

The baby dragon blinked its large eyes.

Kuroko gave the baby dragon a small smile.

The baby dragon suddenly spread its wings, and coincidentally (whether it was really just a coincidence though, Kuroko was very sceptical) the sun shone down on the dragon, causing it to glow.

And the baby dragon began to croon.

A bond was then formed between Kuroko and the baby dragon.

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2. Chapter 2

A soft growl reeled Kuroko back from his memories to the present.

The dragon was staring at Kuroko, eyes wide with concern.

The forest suddenly came alive, and animals were fleeing in all directions. Though the dragon's growl was soft and gentle, it was enough to scare the living daylights out of all the forest animals. They instinctively ran as far away as they could.

Kuroko sighed. They would be back soon anyway. For some strange reason, animals were all fond of Kuroko, and would often draw as close to him as they could get. But with a dragon as a companion, the animals stayed a considerable distance from Kuroko, though they were never very far away.

"I'm alright. I was just remembering things from the past." Kuroko said, stroking the dragon's head.

Remembering?

The dragon's voice invaded Kuroko's mind with a question. Though the dragon's voice was mostly genderless, but Kuroko could detect a hint of what seemed to be a male's voice. The black dragon, as massive as it was, was still not matured yet. It would grow even more, get stronger, and then it would undergo 'maturation'.

No one knows just what happens during that process, because the dragons would often fly off without warning, and then return completely changed. No knight was ever successful in tailing the dragons, how was it possible for a mere human to win against the king of the skies? So rumours spread that perhaps the dragons would leave the human world to go back to their nest; back to the world where they came from.

The matured dragons would speak in fluent human language, and even give wise advice to the humans (when they chose to). And there was a sudden wisdom in their eyes that young dragons did not have.

However, matured dragons would also take on a drastic change emotionally. From the view of humans, it was something negative but no one knows what the dragons truly think.

Because matured dragons would lose nearly all their emotions and become detached from the humans.

The dragons who were raised in the palace may choose to stay there once they matured, but they refused to let anyone ride them. A dragon and knight pair may have had a close bond before, but all that disappears once the dragon undergoes maturation. To them, humans become nothing more than ants swarming around their feet.

They were not violent towards humans, but they were not concerned about them either.

It was simply complete indifference.

That was why there was no such profession as a Dragon Knight. The highest rank was a Royal Knight.

But white dragons were different. White dragons only served the royalty, only the King or Queen and their direct descendants may ride on a matured white dragon. For a long time, this behaviour has always sparked suspicions about the royal family though no one would willingly speak on the matter.

Kuroko softly exhaled, frowning.

A questioning growl and a slight nudge brought Kuroko out of his musings. He blinked, and chuckled as he nodded his head.

"Ah yes, I was just recalling about the first time I met you."

The black dragon blinked its eyes, and bobbed its head, an imitation of a human's nod. Kuroko had tried to break that habit numerous times because the supposedly fearsome black dragon looked completely comical when it did that!

Kuroko groaned softly.

"Did I fail to raise you well?" Kuroko murmured, full of grief.

The dragon tilted its head to the side, yet another imitation.

Kuroko grunted.

"Let's eat. The meat is ready, it just needs to be cooked."

Meat!

The black dragon happily tossed its head from side to side.

Kuroko carefully arranged the raw meat on large leaves in a row. With a short incantation, fire burst from his hands and rapidly cooked the meat. As Kuroko watched the meat cook, unwanted memories began to surface.

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><p>Kuroko was from a family that served and protected the emperor, and they took great pride in their jobs. They were of the highest rank; the Royal Knights.<p>

Generation after generation, everyone from Kuroko's family were born with great strength and a natural talent for the sword. Even the females in the family were all admired knights. The emperor also greatly favoured Kuroko's family, so much that he even gave an order that all mothers or would-be mothers from Kuroko's family were to rest for a minimum of six years.

He would only allow them to go back to their positions once their child had reached five years of age. The emperor had declared that children were important, and their parents had to spend as much time as they could with them. The emperor even allowed the generations of young children from families of royal knights into the palace to play. Even if they accidentally broke a priceless vase or a painting, the emperor would only laugh heartily and gently consoled the fearful children.

As children, consistently being forgiven no matter what they did would result in dire consequences. So the parents would often scold their child harshly when they were in their own homes. This way, the children did not become overly spoilt.

But there was a secret among the royal knights and those who personally served the emperor. Generation after generation of knights came and went, but the emperor never changed. Rumour has it that the emperor had formed a contract with the strongest of all dragons; the white dragons.

Of course, that was excluding the black dragons.

The emperor's life was tied to that of the white dragons. And that the dragons had no other choice than to obey him.

Dragons live for a very long time; no one knew when they first appeared, just that when humans came into existence, dragons were already there.

Thus, if the emperor's life really was tied to the white dragons, that would make the emperor thousands of years old. On the death bed of a mage who protected the emperor, he had revealed that the emperor had in fact changed three times. But the appearance and the personality of the next emperor had always, suspiciously, remained the same.

The people did not mind, because the emperor was always kind and fair.

When he was a child, Kuroko loved to explore the palace.

The plush carpet lining the halls that made it easy to run around barefoot, the colourful tapestries against pure white walls, and the sparkling gold ornaments that told of endless wealth. All these attracted children who loved bright colours, and Kuroko was no exception.

But Kuroko had a strong, mischievous streak that could hardly be contained. His lack of presence made it easier for him to sneak into places that they were not allowed in. Even though his weak strength and presence greatly worried his parents, but back then they had simply passed it off as Kuroko being young.

Kuroko had snuck into the palace at five years of age, well okay, he was still four years old but it was only two more weeks till his birthday, therefore Kuroko considered himself as five years old. He had ran around the palace grounds wildly, searching for something that he could take from the palace, present it to the emperor and demand it as a birthday present.

Kuroko did not fear the emperor after all. To him, the always smiling emperor was kind and gentle.

It was that day that everything changed.

Kuroko had somehow strayed into a secluded corner of the palace. The entire atmosphere was completely different. There were no plush carpets, only painfully cold tiles covered the halls. The air was stale, making breathing difficult. And the place was plain and dreary. It was so quiet that Kuroko's footsteps seemed to amplify the strange stillness of the atmosphere. Kuroko was barefoot; he had taken off his shoes earlier. And yet, his footsteps were astoundingly loud on the cold tiles.

Young Kuroko decided to walk on his toes, making sure that every single step was silent.

He tiptoed down the long corridor, only to come across another. And another. After walking down three eerie corridors, young Kuroko finally arrived at a large door that was ajar.

Curious and filled with a sense of a good adventure, Kuroko had entered the room.

The room was completely bare save for a long staircase heading underground. Kuroko lightly descended the stairs.

And for the first time, the young Kuroko had laid eyes on a dragon.

The white dragon had obviously known that Kuroko was approachingâ€¦ or perhaps not? The dragon's eyes had widened in shock and confusion momentarily, before it screeched at Kuroko, forcing its will into him.

Stay back!

Kuroko immediately froze. He did not take a single step forward, staring blankly at the white dragon. The majestic white dragon was covered in fresh â€" as well as old â€" blood. Large glowing chains were wrapped tightly around the white dragon. But even so, there was still a soft, soothing glow around the dragon that left Kuroko in silent awe.

Kuroko flinched as he finally registered the voice echoing in his head.

What are you? A child of neither human nor one of those creatures, how strange you are.

The dragon asked through mind telepathy, and then Kuroko realized that it was a female voice in his mind. The dragon was female.

Young child, why are you here?

Kuroko shrugged his tiny shoulders, he was unsure why he was here. He was just curious.

The white dragon blinked her eyes in understanding.

Curiosity is dangerous, young child. Do not take a single step forward, there is a strong magical barrier. Turn around, and go back home.

Kuroko gasped. Could the dragon read his mind?

The dragon chuckled, though her laughter sounded hoarse.

Yes, I can read your mind. You are only a young child after all. There are no barriers around your mind.

Kuroko was confused. What was the dragon talking about?

_You are such a strange being. You don't fit in anywhere, but that also makes it hard for you to be traced. I've decided, you will be of use. _

The dragon quickly pulled out one of her white scales with her mouth, and threw it to Kuroko. On reflex, Kuroko caught the scale. It cut into his tiny palm, drenching the white scale red. And then the scale sank into Kuroko's palm, the cut healing over where it disappeared.

The dragon watched satisfactorily as the scale vanished.

Suddenly, the dragon stiffened. Then she immediately ordered Kuroko to leave.

But Kuroko did not move. He did not understand.

Young child, bring yourself out of your daze and leave immediately!

Kuroko found his body taking a step back involuntarily.

Leave! Never come back!

The white dragon roared at him.

Kuroko spun around and started climbing back up the stairs. The white dragon's words sank into Kuroko, becoming an order he could not disobey.

Oh no, that man is approaching too fast. It's too late now, you can't go that way. I will help you, quickly leave this place.

Without warning, Kuroko found himself lifted up, and tossed out a window. Unknown sceneries flashed by him.

The white dragon's voice resounded in his mind.

Be wary of the emperor, young child. He is not what he seems to be.

â€|What do you mean?

We, the white dragons, are chained to that despicable man. Free us!

A sudden storm of voices flooded Kuroko's mind. And then Kuroko's mind was assaulted with images of the past.

For now, I will guard these memories. You are still too young. When the time has come, I will return them and everything will be revealed to you then. Be safe, pitiful non-human child.

Right before darkness claimed him, Kuroko thought he saw the figure of the emperor entering the place where Kuroko was just a moment ago. And before his fading eyesight, Kuroko watched as the emperor brutally stabbed a sword through the dragon's chest, digging out her heart.

And then his vision faded completely.

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><p>The next time Kuroko woke up, he was back home, in his room with no memory of what happened that day.<p>

From then on, Kuroko was unable to enter the palace. He did not know why, but he would be stopped. Not by the guards or the royal knights, but rather, his very own body would just stop moving.

Kuroko could only turn back around, and never again could he set foot in the palace.

And things only went downhill from there. When Kuroko's training to be a knight started at the young age of eight, over a period of five months, he had already drove many sword instructors insane. They told his parents over and over again that it was impossible for Kuroko to be a knight.

The knights all looked down on Kuroko, while the mages were ecstatic. Never before had they seen anyone who had such strong affinity for the elements. The mages pestered Kuroko's parents, saying that should Kuroko be a mage, he would be the strongest mage in history.

But Kuroko's parents refused to let Kuroko be a mage. To them, mages only existed because they were completely useless in everything else. Mages did not deserve respect from the knights. After all, they never fight at the frontlines, only staying at the back which was what they deemed as a cowardly behaviour.

Though they refused, they had also given up hope.

They no longer expected anything from Kuroko, now they were only hoping for their second child to not turn out like the first.

Eight-year-old Kuroko stared at the child in front of him. His little brother, five years younger. Kuroko was not stupid, by calculating their ages, it seemed that Kuroko's parents were already prepared for Kuroko to become a failure. Kuroko took great care of his younger brother, but when the emperor permitted his brother to play in the palace, Kuroko did not go along.

At first, his brother had cried miserably, wanting Kuroko to follow him. Kuroko would reject him as gently as he could. Eventually, perhaps Lady Luck was watching over Kuroko's brother, he managed to make friends with children from the other families of royal knights.

Kuroko's brother no longer called for Kuroko, instead, names of people Kuroko did not know would make up the contents of his stories. Kuroko could see the relief on his parents' faces when Kuroko was no longer mentioned. They had feared that whatever it was that made Kuroko so useless would rub off his younger brother.

They were overjoyed when they saw the strength and talent with the sword within Kuroko's brother.

Now, Kuroko was nothing more than a hindrance to his brother's growth. Because his brother was oblivious to their unease whenever he was with Kuroko. So Kuroko chose to take matters into his own hands.

Three days after his thirteenth birthday, Kuroko packed up his things and left home. He brought with him a few changes of clothes, a small knife, lots of water and his bow and arrows.

Kuroko was not skilled with the sword "okay, he absolutely sucked at it" so at one point, he had tried a change of weapons. Taking up archery instead.

Surprisingly, Kuroko was able to handle archery without much trouble. He secretly began to train himself in archery, until he was capable of hitting the target dead centre while on horseback. In the forest, it would be easier for Kuroko to hunt down prey with his arrows. And with his skill over fire, Kuroko could easily sustain himself.

But it was not guaranteed that he could find water, so water was more important.

Lugging his rather heavy backpack, Kuroko left his home.

Leaving behind only a piece of paper that told his parents that he was leaving, and not to look for him.

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><p>T.B.C

3. Chapter 3

A/N:

Thank you for all your supportive reviews! They keep me going! (:

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><p>A sudden cold breeze startled Kuroko, and he jumped up.<p>

A reprimanding growl sounded to his side, and Kuroko blinked at the annoyed dragon. With a flicked of its tail, the dragon directed Kuroko's gaze to the meat. Burnt meat.

"Ahâ€|"

Kuroko lightly scratched his face in embarrassment. One of the abilities that Kuroko discovered the black dragon had was the control over water. Seems like Kuroko was too distracted, resulting in having the dragon cool down the fire.

"â€|It's only a little burnt! It's still edible, just trimming off the sides and it should be alright."

Kuroko inspected the meat, and then turned to the dragon.

The black dragon was clearly annoyed, it preferred mostly rare meat if the meat is to be cooked, but it would also often eat its prey raw.

"Come on, the meat will be wasted then. Won't you eat?" Kuroko tried to cajole the dragon.

With a loud huff, the dragon reached down and picked up the largest piece of meat, swallowing it quickly. Its tail flicked from side to side, and eventually decided that the meat was still alright. The dragon then started eating the rest.

Kuroko smiled.

"Looks like I did a somewhat good job of raising you after all, at least you don't waste food even if it may not be to your liking."

The black dragon's eyes flicked to Kuroko before quickly looking away, and its tail circled around where Kuroko was sitting. Any other person would probably scream in fright at being cornered by a dragon, especially when said tail was covered with sharp scales and ridiculously large needle-like spikes. Really, a single casual flick of the dragon's tail would be more than enough to send the spikes tearing straight into the body of a knight fully protected by their armour.

But Kuroko was not afraid. The dragon seemed to adore him anyway, with how it kept its spiked tail end away even as it formed a protective circle around Kuroko, allowing him to eat without worries about being attacked.

Chuckling, Kuroko then ate his own portion as well.

As he ate, his eyes wondered around. His gaze fell on to the little house made from sturdy trees. It was not very large, but was spacious enough for a bedroom and a living room. It was the most impressive thing Kuroko had built with his hands. Of course, with the black dragon's help.

Before the black dragon came along, Kuroko had mostly slept in a triangular hut made from thin tree trunks. He did not have the strength needed to lift heavy tree trunks, so he did the best he could. Three years after he took the dragon in and raised it, all of a sudden, the dragon had dragged back large tree trunks to the little clearing where Kuroko was living.

In only three years, the dragon had grown twenty times the size it was as a baby. It could easily tear down trees without any trouble. Kuroko did not know how it knew to build a house, but with its help, Kuroko managed to build an impressive place to live in.

The dragon slept outside the house, acting like a guard dog.

Every now and then though, Kuroko realized that the dragon would disappear. Kuroko had a feeling that whenever the dragon disappeared, it was in fact learning about both the human and dragon world. After all, Kuroko did not know much about dragon powers since his parents never saw the need to tell him because he was not going to be a knight.

But the powerless dragon would disappear, only to return with abilities. And this power kept growing. From only manipulating water to turning it to ice, and even having the ability to call forth rain.

"I wonder if the day you would leave me is approaching sooner than I thought." Kuroko murmured softly, picking at his food.

Three years ago, it was manipulation of water. Now after two years, the dragon had already mastered how to use lightning, fire, and something Kuroko suspected was the famous 'Dragon's Breath'.

These abilities did not sound very impressive, but the actual truth

was terrifying.

For advanced mages, a medium sized fireball would be strong enough to incinerate a few large trees. But the exact same sized fireball produced by dragon could wipe out an entire forest. The difference in power was one reason why dragons were always at the top.

It was like comparing the sun to a lamp.

After all, how could one even attempt to stab a dragon with a sword when said sword would break upon coming into contact with its scales? Things about how one should attack the soft, unprotected bellies of dragons to kill them were complete nonsense.

The only way to kill them was to have a dragon drop all guard against you, when their scales are relaxed, that is when a dragon is at their most vulnerable. It is possible then, to run a sword into their chest which would result in their death.

The underbellies of dragon may look unprotected, but the actual truth was that it was covered with numerous scales! Kuroko knew this very well. When he had played wrestling with the black dragon many years ago, Kuroko had end up with fatal injuries when he carelessly attempted to tickle the dragon into submission from what he assumed was a soft underbelly.

The dragon had panicked; rapidly licking Kuroko's wounds over and over. After a few minutes, the wounds had closed over due to the healing properties of the dragon's saliva. The dragon had then started a massive guilty grovelling towards Kuroko. It absolutely refused to let Kuroko near it, and for a period of time, Kuroko barely saw a shadow of the dragon. Food was constantly left out for Kuroko, cooked to the way he liked. But Kuroko never saw the dragon.

Eventually, Kuroko snapped.

He was merciless, giving the dragon two choices. One, to appear before Kuroko and stop running away. Two, Kuroko would leave, and the dragon would be all alone.

Well, judging from how the dragon was still beside him now, surely one could guess what the dragon's choice was.

Kuroko glanced at the dragon beside him, sighing softly as he slumped against the body of the dragon.

A crooning filled with curiosity met Kuroko's ears.

Kuroko's eyes closed as he smiled contently.

"You know, I will miss you when you leave."

The dragon's crooning took on an anxious tone, and Kuroko found himself nearly being nuzzled to death by the dragon.

Kuroko patted the dragon's head, lightly brushing his fingers across the many horns on its head.

No! Not leaving, won't leave!

The force behind the dragon's voice left Kuroko feeling a bit dizzy.

"You will have to, you know. You will leave when it is time for you to become an adult."

No! Don't wanna!

"Really, you..." Kuroko sighed, "Do you know why even after five years with you, I have yet to give you a name? That's because no human can name a dragon. When you become an adult, a name will be given to you. How so, I do not know. When I was a child, I had heard the knights at the palace talking. They said that when they had tried to call the matured dragons the name they had given them, the dragons flew into a rage so deadly to the world that naming dragons became a taboo. Therefore, they could only wait for the dragons to give them a name to call them by, which was certainly not their true name.

"Between the knights, it has been said that a dragon's true name holds a deadly power. Though I am unsure, I think that perhaps the reason why the dragons guard their true name so fiercely may be because it is one of their weaknesses? A dragon is wise, I'm sure that they would not willingly place something that important into the possession of someone else."

The black dragon thrashed its head from side to side, unwilling to listen but not moving an inch because Kuroko was still leaning against its body.

Kuroko reached up, grabbing hold of the dragon's head.

Kneeling, Kuroko forced the dragon's head down to his eye level.

The dragon whined pitifully.

Kuroko stared hard at the dragon.

"I am not saying you have to leave now, but you will leave one day. The reason why I refuse to name you is because I cannot bare the fact that you would come to hate that name so much after your maturation that you would be willing to kill me."

Won't kill! Won't hurt! No!

Kuroko smiled.

"I appreciate your kindness, but no one knows what will happen in the future."

I know. I can see the future.

The dragon suddenly calmed, large eyes relaxing from its previous frenzied state.

Kuroko blinked at the change.

I can see.

Kuroko released his grip on the dragon's head.

"You can see? But you are not yet matured, how can you have this ability? All white dragons can only see after they have matured."

The dragon rested its nose on Kuroko's chest, or more precisely, it was seeking out Kuroko's heart.

Here. It's warm. Always, from the first meeting. Always warm, will not change. I know.

Kuroko froze.

The narrow pupils of the dragon's eyes started to expand, and a strange light shone from the depth of its eyes.

_I cannot see everything. But here, _the dragon lightly tapped on Kuroko's chest, _will never change. _

The dragon crooned, the pupils of its eyes shrinking once more.

Won't kill, won't hurt, so here will never change.

Kuroko lifted his hand, gently tracing the ridge above its eye.

"What are you? You are not just a black dragon, are you?" Kuroko breathed.

The dragon blinked, but did not speak.

"At first, I took you in with hopes that I would be able to guide you away from a path filled with evil. I wanted to show the world that not all black dragons are evil, that there was no need to hunt them down."

Kuroko paused.

"But you, from the very start you were different. Baby dragons, even the majestic white dragons, are all natural predators. They would hunt down smaller prey for food on instinct. But you, you refused to hunt. I had assumed that you were too weak to hunt, but even after you grew stronger, you did not make any move to attempt to kill on your own. I had to force you to learn how to feed yourself."

A smile spread across Kuroko's face.

"I really should have known. The moment I picked you up, and when the sun shone down on you, I should have realized that you are special."

The dragon's eyes closed, and a rumbling purr echoed around the silent forest.

Kuroko rested his head against the dragon's.

"Yeah," he whispered, "I like you too."

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><p>Kuroko stared at the black dragon.<p>

Another five years had passed, and the dragon had grown. The sudden slow progress of its growth startled Kuroko, and he had nearly driven himself insane with worry that he had been raising the dragon wrongly.

In the past five years, the dragon only grew about four metres in height and another five in length.

After the abnormal rapid growth of the baby dragon, Kuroko had been expecting another growth spurt, only to be proven wrong. Dragons are truly very mysterious creatures.

And now, Kuroko knew it was time.

The black dragon would constantly stare at the sky, and remain that way for hours. Kuroko knew that the dragon wanted to leave. Every now and then, Kuroko would catch the dragon staring at him for long minutes, and then it would turn its head back to the sky.

Ten years. It had already been ten years since Kuroko found the dragon. Now at twenty-three, Kuroko had been thinking of entering the city once more. Over the past few weeks, there was an inexplicable urge rising from within him. Kuroko wanted " needed " to return to the city.

He did not know why he needed to.

Kuroko was playing with little balls of fire, wrapping the flames around a pebble and attempting to burn it to ashes. Over the years, Kuroko had shamelessly learnt magic skills from the dragon. He imitated the dragon's fire ability, where one tiny fireball is enough to burn down half a forest.

It was nearly impossible to learn the properties of a dragon's magic abilities. Many mages of all levels have tried and failed. Dragons have no need for incantations, but mages are different. To form a strong spell, an incantation is needed to draw the magic circle.

Because the very base of the dragon's magic differs from a human's, it was extremely difficult for a human to learn the skills of dragons. Although Kuroko suspected that perhaps there were a few successful mages, but their achievements were never made public.

Dragons were prideful creatures; they would rather rip a human in half than to ever help humans learn of their unique magic. Kuroko only succeeded in learning because the black dragon had generously decided to help him.

It was extremely powerful indeed, but it came with a cost.

Kuroko could only use this ability three times. Using this powerful magic three times in a row would deplete Kuroko of all his stamina, and leave him vulnerable to attacks. Not just that, but his body would be affected too. The toll on his body was too great, causing

fatal internal damage.

Many times, the black dragon had to pull out one of its scales, crush it down, drip its own blood over the powder and force it down Kuroko's throat to heal him from the internal wounds. The scales quickly grew back of course, but the destroyed forest could not grow back as quickly even with Kuroko's affinity with the earth element.

So Kuroko would usually ride the black dragon to somewhere far, far away to practice. The black dragon and Kuroko were very careful to fly high enough that they became nothing more than birds flying through the skies to those below.

They would pick patches of forests that would survive being Kuroko's training ground.

Kuroko would burn down forests, and grow them back. His skills with fire and earth magic had risen to what mages would consider as 'godly'.

Kuroko sighed as the little pebble cracked, piercing the thick silence between Kuroko and the dragon.

He stood up, walking over to the dragon.

The dragon turned its head towards Kuroko, blinking its eyes in acknowledgement.

Kuroko motioned for the dragon to lower its head, and Kuroko happily snuggled into the warm, gentle nuzzles. Running his fingers over the ridge over the dragon's eye, Kuroko wondered if the dragon would react the same way as it had done five years ago once Kuroko told it his decision.

Well, he could only try and find out, right?

"Do you still remember our talk from five years ago?" Kuroko asked gently.

The dragon's entire body stiffened. Ah, so it did.

"You should go. You can't remain as a child forever."

Soft whining came from the dragon, but it did not protest as much as it did before.

"Recently, I have been feeling the urge to go back to the city. I think these events came at a good time. I will go into the city, and you can leave without worries."

The dragon lightly nudged Kuroko.

Kuroko smiled.

"You know, don't you? The city is too dangerous for you. No one would accept a black dragon. I won't have you risk yourself trying to sneak in with me."

The dragon let its head fall to the ground, looking exactly like a

petulant child.

Kuroko knelt in front of the dragon, stroking the horns on its head and gently caressing the large fangs protruding from its mouth.

Staring into the dragon's eyes, Kuroko reluctantly but resolutely whispered the words needed for the dragon to leave.

"Go. Fly, my dragon. Go home."

The dragon's eyes slid shut. Kuroko did not move, and neither did the dragon.

Slowly, the dragon's eyes opened.

They were clear. The dragon had made its decision.

It lifted its head from the ground, raising it to the sky.

"We may not meet again, even if we do, things will be different. But if you still choose to accept me, and I will return it in kind."

Kuroko smiled softly, concealing his emotions behind a gentle smile. It would be a lie to say that he was not worried about the dragon. Perhaps it was selfish of him, but should they meet once more when the dragon had matured, Kuroko was deathly afraid of the dragon rejecting him.

What if the dragon had forgotten everything about their time together? What if it decided to kill Kuroko upon their meeting? Kuroko could defend himself, but he would not be able to kill the dragon, that was absolute. Perhaps, perhaps it would be better for them to never meet again.

The dragon stared at Kuroko " slashing its tail once " and a low growl shook the earth.

This growl was one that Kuroko was very familiar with; where the dragon agreed, though reluctantly, with Kuroko.

The dragon glanced once more at the sky, and suddenly turned its head to the direction of the city. And then Kuroko found himself under the scrutiny of the dragon.

Kuroko chuckled.

"I will be fine. I can make it to the city on my own."

The dragon tilted its head, and if Kuroko's eyes were not playing tricks on him, he could swear that he saw doubt in those large eyes.

"You " "

Kuroko's eyes narrowed.

The dragon did not back down.

"I will be fine, understand? Now go." Kuroko jab his finger in the direction of the sky.

The dragon's mouth opened, and its eyes gleamed. Before Kuroko could move a single step, he found himself seated on the dragon's head. Then he was quickly transferred onto a large tree branch, high up in the air. Kuroko was not afraid of heights; he could always use the wind element to help him with his descend from such a high tree.

What Kuroko was slightly wary of was the dragon's ability to move faster than a lightning bolt. How was something that large actually capable of moving so fast? If he were to meet a dragon who wanted to kill him, Kuroko would end up dead before he could even open his mouth to recite his incantation for his advanced spells.

It's no wonder mages were absolutely terrified of dragons. Even veteran knights were very wary of going against a dragon, especially with their incomprehensible fast speed.

The black dragon crooned at him, large eyes blinking in tender affection at Kuroko.

A smile made its way onto Kuroko's lips.

"Goodbye."

The dragon spread its wings, flapping them once. The forest debris was caught in a miniature tornado. Kuroko held on tight to the tree, preventing himself from flying off. Ah. Usually, the dragon would only spread its wings when Kuroko was on its back, where he was safe from the assault of the crazy gust of wind coming from the dragon's wings. It's good that the dragon had the foresight to bring Kuroko to higher ground else he would end up dead if he slams into a tree from the force of the wind.

Smiling, Kuroko watched as the dragon took off, disappearing with unimaginable speed.

Once the dragon was gone, Kuroko jumped from the tree, using wind magic to get him safely to the ground.

Kuroko entered the cabin, clearing it of all his belongings.

He carefully stored away the black dragon scales and a little vial of dragon's blood at the very bottom of his backpack. The dragon had insisted for Kuroko to take it many months ago, but he had yet to use them. They could revive him when he was alone and near death from using powerful magic.

Without looking back, Kuroko started walking, a soft incantation spilling from his lips. Once Kuroko was relatively far away, a large red magic circle appeared under the cabin.

A soft, muffled explosion.

The cabin that Kuroko had stayed in burst into flames, burning down everything. But the grass and all life around it remained unaffected. The ashes blew in the wind, erasing all traces of where he had lived with the dragon.

"Now then, to the city it is."

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><p>T.B.C

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file.